

God is Faithful. You are not alone.

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[0 : 00] Oops. Oops. We are in the book of Zechariah today.

And we're going to be in Zechariah pretty much, I don't know, for the next couple of weeks or so. But today we're taking a look in the book of Zechariah. We're going to be dealing with chapters 1 and 6. Next week we're also going to be in chapter 1 and chapter 5.

1 and 6. It'll make sense later. The key idea today. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved.

A worker who has no need to be ashamed rightly handling the word of truth. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved.

[1 : 09] A worker who has no need to be ashamed. All right. Introduction. Today in Zechariah. We're going to be looking for the next couple of weeks through chapters 1 through 6.

There's nine visions in there. Each of the first eight visions are paired in the, not oriental, but in the eastern way of pairing them.

And they all point to the final. In America we go 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Conclusion. Right? But what they would do is they would take two thoughts.

And they would, they'd have the first thought and the last thought. Then they'd have the second thought and the next thought. And so on and so forth. And then the middle point would be right here at the end.

This time we've got 1 and 8, 2 and 7, 3 and 6, 4 and 5. And they all point to this big conclusion. Okay? That's, that's a pretty standard way for them to present an argument versus our linear, you go from A to B to C.

[2 : 20] Right? I mean, we're all familiar with that because that's, that's the way we think in America. But this is a different cultural way of pointing to the same conclusion.

All right. So today we're going to be looking at vision number 1. And 8. All right. Somebody's awake. I knew that music would get you.

All right. So what I'm going to do is I'm going to start off and I'm going to read the two visions.

Okay? They are visions. They are dream visions.

There are things in there that, well, the deeper into them we get, the weirder they'll be. Trust me.

But here we go. We're going to start with the first vision in chapter 1 of the book of Zechariah, beginning in verse 7.

On the 24th day of the 11th month, which is the month of Shabbat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah, saying, I saw in the night and behold, a man riding on a red horse.

[3 : 31] And he was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen, and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. Then I said, what are these, my Lord?

The angel who talked with me said to me, I will show you what they are. So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, these are they whom the Lord has sent to patrol the earth.

And they answered the angel of the Lord, who was standing among the myrtle trees, and said, we have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth remains at rest.

Then the angel of the Lord said, O Lord of hosts, how long will you have no mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which you have been angry these 70 years?

And the Lord answered gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. So the angel who talked with me said to me, cry out, thus says the Lord of hosts, I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion, and I am exceedingly angry with the nations that are at ease.

[4 : 45] For while I was angry but a little, they furthered the disaster. Therefore, thus says the Lord, I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy.

My house shall be built in it, declares the Lord of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. Cry out again, thus says the Lord of hosts, my city shall again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.

Oy vey. Let's take a look at this. I broke it down just a little bit. Okay. There's four horsemen.

There's two reds. You got some water?

You going to make it? I mean, I know I'm a great preacher, but you shouldn't be that choked up over it. All right.

So in this first vision, there's four horsemen. There's one guy on a red horse, and then behind him is a guy on a red horse and a couple other colors. All right. Four horsemen. And these horsemen, they go out and they patrol the earth, right?

[6 : 01] And, you know, these are those, verse 10, whom the Lord has sent out to patrol the earth. So they go out, and what do they find? They find that everybody's at peace, right?

Except who? Jerusalem's not at peace because they're still in captivity. This is really cool. Look down here in verse 12.

The angel of the Lord said, O Lord of hosts, how long will you have no mercy on Jerusalem? It's not the prophet Zechariah, but one of the angels is like, hey, what about Jerusalem?

What about Israel? And what does God say? God says, look, I was unhappy, but they've gone too far, and my house is going to be rebuilt.

I will comfort Jerusalem. Okay? So that's the first vision. He's asleep. He's got this picture of these four dudes. They're the ones that are sent out to patrol the earth, and they're talking, and what about the fact that the 70 years up, isn't Jerusalem supposed to be redeemed?

[7 : 08] And God says, on it. All together. All right. So then what was the first one? It was chapter 6, 1 through 8. All right. So here we go. Oops.

Got too far ahead. Chapter 6, verses 1 through 8. Here we go. Again, I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold. Now, remember, this is the eighth vision. Okay? We're skipped ahead.

This is number eight, and it's paired with number one. And it says, Again, I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four chariots came out from between two mountains.

The mountains were mountains of bronze. The first chariot had red horses. The second black horses. The third white horses. The fourth chariot dappled horses, all of them strong.

Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, what are these, my Lord? And the angel answered and said to me, these are going out to the four winds of heaven after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth.

[8 : 09] The chariot with the black horses goes toward the north country. The white goes to the south country. When the strong horses came out, they were impatient to go and patrol the earth.

And he said, go patrol the earth. So they patrolled the earth. Then he cried to me, behold, those who are going toward the north country have set my spirit at rest in the north country.

Okay, in the first vision, how many horses were there? Okay, I was just... How many horses are in the second vision?

Don't say four because that wouldn't be right. Eight. That's right, because they had multiple horses, at least eight, because each chariot had multiple horses pulling it.

You will find some people who will delve into the number of horses and they will pull apart the colors and they will try and make all sorts of wonderful... Whatever.

[9 : 10] You can't do that, all right? They're describing there were these horses that were these color and there were these horses. It says these horses were strong. What's interesting about the second vision, it says that they're going to go on patrol.

But in the first vision, individuals were going out on a reconnaissance patrol. Look in the first vision and what does it say?

They report back and they say, this is what the condition of the world is, right? This is a reconnaissance in force. Do you know what that means if you're military minded?

Do you know what you do if you're going to recon in force? You're going to go blow things up.

You're going to go get things done, right? Now, there's a recon patrol and they go out and they do this.

They hide and they look. That was the first vision. The second vision, they're going to go out and they're going to get something done, right? And look what it says.

[10:14] It says that they were going to go what? Those who went to the north report, my spirit has been put to rest. Do you know why? Because they went out and they kicked some northern tail.

They reconed in force. So in the first one, they're doing this to go out and see what's going on. And they report back, everybody's happy in the whole world except Jerusalem.

God says, I've got that. And in the second one, he sends out the second patrol, the second patrol. And they're like, let's go, baby.

And they go out and they take care of the deal. And Jerusalem, we know, is restored and all that.

Okay. Any questions on this? You guys good?

We got the two visions. They both have four sets of horses. They're both on patrol. When you see the red horses, I'm thinking of what that kind of thing is.

[11:16] No, but that's a common thing that people will think, especially when you're looking towards revelations, when they've got, it's just a red horse, like a sorrel.

Yeah, good question, though. All right. So, oh, oh, shoot. How many of you have been paying attention to the news this week?

Don't look at me with that tone of voice. Do you guys know what Donald Trump did this week?

There's this huge alien dump, right, of all these classified ads.

And I'm here to tell you that aliens exist, but E.T. doesn't. All right? This, all these, what would you call it, a big box of nothing burgers?

Okay. Yeah, all these declassified, they don't mean anything. Or do they? As believers, we are familiar with the fact that there are beings, intelligent beings, that are not human.

[12:30] They're not E.T., though. Let me clarify this. Those people who believe in the X-Files type aliens, you know, the blue-green things that fly here in space, saucers from different worlds to land and, take me to your leader.

That's garbage. That's an evolutionary misbelief. What there are, though, are beings of supernatural origin, meaning God created them, and they are not humans.

These not human beings were created as angels, and we know that a third of them fell, and they are led by anybody? Satan or Lucifer, whatever you want to call him.

And they are active in the world. Turn in your Bibles to the book of Daniel. And this is an important one to understand, because it does a good job of highlighting what's going on.

In the book of Daniel, chapter 10, pick it up in verse 10. Behold, Daniel's been praying.

[13:52] Things have been going on. And Daniel says, Behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. And he said to me, O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you and stand upright.

For now I have been sent to you. Sent to you. Pay attention. That's important. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

Then he said to me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humble yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.

The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days. But Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia.

Daniel set his heart to be humble and honor the Lord, to know him and to serve him.

[14:58] And he was praying. And someone was dispensed by God to go help Daniel. But it says that he was opposed for three weeks, 21 days, until another being came and rescued him and helped him to get on his way.

There are forces at work around us. Angels and demons. They are very real and they are active.

If you were to turn to Acts chapter 12, you get the story of the apostle Peter, who's asleep in prison. And an angel walks up to him and goes, Wake up, Peter, and follow me. And, you know, get up, get dressed. And he takes him out and secures him from freedom.

My wife was reminding me of the prophet whose servant was all freaked out because of the army that was around him. He said, Open his eyes, Lord, let him see. And the hills were surrounded with the host of heaven, right?

[16:07] But we're Americans. And we don't think about these things. You know, we make fun of those people who believe in... Satan and his minions are real.

Just as God and his angels are real. We tend not to spend a lot of time thinking about them. But they are very real. And they are very active.

And you ignore this truth to your own danger. Having said all that, we need to remember this. That among these aliens, we truly have some enemies. Ephesians chapter 6 verse 12 says, We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of darkness. We have real opposition. And it's not Larry out there who doesn't believe in God.

[17:16] He's not our opponent. He is our mission. He is our ministry. We're here to reach Larry with the gospel. Our foes are the fallen ones.

Okay? Questions? Questions? All right. Close your Bibles. No looking at your neighbor's papers. It's pop quiz time. You guys ready? Here we go. Who's that? The guy.

We'll give half credit on that one. That's right. That's Emmanuel Swedenborg. Right? We talked about him last week. All right. All right. So you guys are already doing okay. You got 15 out of 30. All right. Question number two. Who's that? His son. No. What have I been talking about?

[18:20] I've been talking about... Go ahead. The Mormon guy. All right. We're up to 50%. We're now at Joseph Smith.

Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Bonus time here. Here we go. The third and... Well, not final round. But the third round. Here we go. That one's tough.

Kind of hard to see from far away. I'll give you a hint. Dude's got a turban. Who said that? Atta boy, Frank. Dawn, you're on it too.

That's right. Muhammad. Bonus round. Why are these three on the wall?

Any idea? Go ahead. Take it. Try... Take a shot. Not you. The smart guy in the back.

[19:18] Yeah. Go ahead. Take a shot. You're right. about was visited by angels. Muhammad says that he was visited by angels. Smith visited by...

Garbage. Why do we say that? Well, first of all, were they visited? Most likely. They probably were. But they were given a twisted gospel. We know that the Word of God is perfect and complete for all that we need right now. That's what it says. And for them to twist and pervert the gospel reflects where they were getting their information.

Okay. I really didn't want to spend all my time talking about aliens. What? Fallen angels. And what do we call those? Demons. Demons. Evil beings.

Foes. Our enemies. Those who are trying to work against God. But, as I said, though, I didn't want... I just thought, you know, I didn't plan for Emmanuel Swedenborg last week to come up with this this week. It's just very fortuitous that it worked.

But there's more here that I think is really, really important. I mean, this is... Don't get me wrong. The fact that there are enemies that are not of this world that we face, that is a very real and important thing for you to understand.

[21:15] Yes, sir? Were those three people that were alive at one time? At one time, yes. I didn't know if that was a good set.

No, they were alive at one time. Okay. But I think that there is more that we can pick up from these two visions. Number one.

God is faithful. Many people question or doubt this.

Most often because they're misreading or misapplying Scripture. Let me illustrate. Deuteronomy chapter 28.

We read this. If you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth, and all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you obey the voice of the Lord your God.

[22:30] There are people who take that Scripture wrongly. What does that Scripture say? That Scripture says if you obey and follow the commandments, good things are going to happen to you, right?

And then what happens? I tried to do good and nothing good happened to me. That verse isn't written to us. That verse was written to the nation of Israel.

It doesn't apply to us. If we try and apply that verse directly to our lives, we're going to get frustrated. You see, what was the key thought today?

What was the first thing we said? Dang it, she's right. What was the first thing I said about the sermon, woman?

First thing I said about the sermon? Study to show yourself approved. A workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of God. That's why we are dispensational in our theology. [23 : 33] We understand that there are parts of Scripture that were written to different people at different times. And we understand that we can't reach back into that and apply it to us because it doesn't work that way.

Now, can we learn things from back there? Absolutely. All Scripture is inspired of God and His prophet for instruction and correction and righteousness. But if we're going to apply something to us, it needs to be written to us.

If we try and apply things that aren't written to us, then we start doubting whether or not God is honest and truthful. Whether God's going to be faithful to His Word. Secondly, God is faithful. He will save. He has promised. And it is available. All the way back when man first sinned in the garden, God said, I will send a Savior.

And in Ephesians chapter 2, verse 8 and 9, it says, For by grace are you saved through faith that is not of works, lest man should boast. God is faithful.

[24 : 43] He will redeem us. He has offered salvation to everybody. The question is, will we believe? Will we accept it?

For by grace you are saved, not through your family, not through going to the right church. Though that's really important. We're saved by faith.

By grace through faith in Christ alone. Another way that God is faithful. He offers us a way to escape temptation.

He didn't say it would be easy. He didn't say it would be the way you want to go. But is there a way for us to escape? He is faithful.

There is always a way to escape temptation. We could go on and on about the faithfulness of God. But specifically, do you guys remember in Zechariah chapter 1?

[25 : 44] Go ahead and turn back there. In Zechariah chapter 1. I went to Haggai, Zechariah.

Here we go, Zechariah. We get this scene in the first vision in chapter 1. You know, they've gone out and they've patrolled and they come back in verse 11. The angel, they answer the angel of the Lord who is standing there and we've patrolled the earth and behold, everybody's at rest.

Then the angel of the Lord said, O Lord of hosts, how long will you have no mercy on Jerusalem? And what does God say? What's going to happen?

And what do we see in the last vision? We see a patrol in force. God is faithful. He said after 70 years, Jerusalem will be reestablished.

What happened after 70 years? Jerusalem was reestablished. God is faithful. I got one more thing I want to say to you today.

[26 : 51] It's important for us to understand that there really are spiritual beings at work in this world. Some are on our side, some are against us. That's important. The faithfulness of God is fundamental.

God is faithful. We can live our whole lives depending upon Him. He will not change. He will not abandon His word.

He will not forget. He will not wake up late and not be able to take care of it. He won't like, oh no, I don't have enough gas to get there. God is faithful. He's going to take care of it. God is faithful. But it's important for us to understand this. That God has work for us to do. If I say God uses people, I don't want you to think it negatively.

That's why He allows others work. You understand that God is all-powerful? God is all-knowing? I mean, these are foundational parts of what we believe.

[28 : 08] God is omnipresent. That means He's everywhere. God is all-knowing. He's omnipotent. He knows what's happening. And He's omnipotent, which means that He can do whatever He wants.

Whatever He desires gets done. Question. Why then does He have angels out on patrol to report back to Him?

Why then does God have angels out on recon in force to do things? Because He created them for that purpose.

So that they could go out and do these things. And I don't know. He's God. He set it up that way. And what's true about those angels that He set out is true about you and I. If you look in Genesis 2, verse 15, you're going to find...

[29 : 08] Well, I'm going to go ahead and read it. I'm not just going to allude to the Bible. I'm going to read it. Genesis 2, verse 15. You've got to understand, God has just created all things.

And in chapter 2, He's creating man and He's putting him in the garden. And verse 15 says this. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to do what?

To work it. We are created with a purpose. We are created to do things. Time out from your normally scheduled sermon.

I'm going to rant for a bit. All in favor? Say aye. All opposed? Don't count. This is the problem with what's happening in America today.

There are not enough people working. There are too many people getting money for breathing. We were created by God to do.

[30 : 24] To accomplish things. To be about things. He put us in the garden to work. And if you want to hurt somebody, if you want to crush their spirit, give them stuff for breathing.

That devalues them as they were created. You want to build people up. You want to make them feel worth something. You want to create a stronger...

Say, get off your butt and get a job. Now sadly, what's going to happen if you tell people that? Some people are going to try and whine about it and not work.

You want to know what's going to happen to them? They're not going to get no money. And quite honestly, they'll be hungry. And cold. But those of us that are working can encourage them and show them and lead them.

Alright, I'm going to get off my soapbox. Temporarily. I'll get back on it later. Not today though, I hope. We were created to do, to accomplish, to work.

[31 : 40] And salvation, turning to God, turning away from sin, allows us to accomplish what God has created us for.

Turn to Ephesians chapter 2. Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians.

Ephesians chapter 2. A lot of people are familiar with verses 8 and 9, which are great. Those are important verses. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of your own doing. It is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

But verse 10. Don't get me wrong. Salvation wasn't free, right? What did salvation cost? The life of Christ, right? He had to leave glory, take upon himself humanity, be born and live, and then die on a cross.

But because God has achieved that, because he has earned that, because he's paid for it, he can give it to whom he will. And who does he will to give it to?

[32 : 51] Those who turn to him in faith. Those who humble themselves before him. But, look at verse 10. It's not of works, so that no one may boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Look, my friends, God not only uses or allows us to work, but he has created us to do things. That's his purpose for us, is for us to be productive members of his creation.

And it says that he created us in Christ Jesus so that we could do the good works. And one major job that he has for everybody is to spread the good news about Jesus Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 5, verse 18. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 18.

[34 : 09] All this is from God, who through Christ Jesus reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. Each and every one of us are supposed to be out there telling people about Jesus.

We're supposed to be doing the work that God has set up for us. In that, we are going to find that there are those that are not only on our side, but also oppose us.

At least, that's what the Word of God teaches. And we see all of that in those two visions. We see beings that were created to go out and patrol.

We see that we also have been created with a purpose. We see that God is faithful and that he is going to accomplish what he says he will. Which means that if he says that he will save those who turn to him in faith, he will.

Alright. Let me wrap this up. Conclusion. What can you take home with this? Number one, you are not alone.

[35 : 24] You are not alone. Not only do you have your fellow believers, but God has agents, angelic beings that go about the earth doing his will.

Now, I'm not saying that everywhere you go, you got an angel sitting on your shoulder or anything like that. But I do know this. That we are not alone in this battle. Okay?
You are not alone. Number two, God is faithful. He will never abandon you. He will never forget you. He will never forget what he has promised.
You can trust God. And finally, get to work. That sounds a little bit more, more, but let us be about the business that God has created us for.
Let us be faithful in serving him. It's not always easy. It's not always fun. It's not always well received.
[36 : 37] But look, you want to improve your walk with the Lord? Tell somebody about Jesus. You want to be stronger in your faith? Exercise it.
You want to rest comfortably in the Lord? Do what he's asked you to do. That's what you've been created for. We are not alone.
God is faithful and we got a job to do. Let's be about it. Father, I thank you for your word. Amen.